

#GE2017 SNP launch manifesto today

To a packed Concert Hall in Perth where the SNP have previously held their party conference the party leader Nicola Sturgeon walked on sure of one thing – the audience were going to like what she said.

And they did. Several times during her 20 minute speech the crowd applauded and cheered her loudly.

With the same strap line as before – Stronger for Scotland – the 48 page manifesto sets out the key aims for the Scots who will be returned to Westminster, although whether there are as many as before will remain to be seen.



The manifesto includes commitments to:

- An alternative to austerity that will release almost £120 billion for public spending over the next parliament, achieving a current budget balance by the final year of the parliament
- Protect public services, including a plan for additional NHS spending across the UK that would, by 2021/22, increase the NHS Scotland budget by up to £1 billion over and above our existing plans
- Increase the Minimum Wage to the level of the Real Living Wage, taking the Minimum Wage to over £10 per hour by the end of the parliament
- Lift the freeze on benefits and abolish the two-child cap and the Rape Clause
- Protect the Triple Lock on pensions, protect the winter fuel allowance and support fair pensions for women

- No increase in taxation on the low paid, in National Insurance or in VAT.
- Support a UK-wide increase in the higher rate of taxation from 45p to 50p.
- Double the employment allowance providing a National Insurance discount for job-creation
- Protect Scotland's place in the single market, and demand for the Scottish Government a place at the table in Brexit negotiations
- Secure, by winning a majority of Scottish seats, a reinforcement of the existing mandate for Scotland having a choice on its future when the terms of Brexit are clear

So for now campaigning goes on but on much the same agenda as before. This manifesto does not change the SNP position on independence but they do want to wait till the terms of Brexit become clear.

They also want to repair the public finances by 2022 to ensure investment in public services. They want to return the deficit to pre-crash average and set public debt on a downward trend.

The manifesto can be read in full on the SNP website.